



Spark Gap

Vol. 35, Issue 9, September 2019 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for thirty-five years*

On Our MARC:

Have you heard the big news? Mid-State Amateur Radio Club is no longer WA9RDF.
We are now W9MID!

A little history on the Club: The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club started in 1984 with the call sign of KB9LOC. There was a MARC member named Ira “Sandy” Sanders who was one of the original MARC members in 1984. He dropped his membership when club dues went from \$6.00 to \$18.00 a year. The dues increase was imposed to pay for the telephone line that was used for the new auto-patch system. MARC officers felt the increase would bring in the extra income to offset increased cost for club liability insurance and other equipment upgrades. Sandy was a regular at Field Day, but never operated. He left the heavy lifting to others. We needed his expertise as a CW operator.

When he passed away, the club took over his call sign 1/04/2000 in his memory. MARC has used the call sign WA9RDF since then.

Up until about two years ago, the idea of a new call sign was not considered.

Bruce, K9ICP, approached the club with the idea of a new call as some members thought that WA9RDF was difficult to be understood by a contact during the chaos of field day. This is when Bruce thought we should change if the right call became available. The club voted on the idea of change. A BIG thanks to Bruce for all his time and effort on finding the club the perfect call. Bruce found that the call sign W9MID was coming up to be canceled on Aug 21, 2019. He told the members about the call sign at the July meeting and everyone agreed it was the perfect call for the club. A motion was made and carried to apply for the vanity call change. Bruce and Chris kept an eye on it and once Aug 22, 2019 got here and the call was canceled, Chris filed for the call. Mid-State Amateur Radio Club became W9MID on Sept 10, 2019.

Again, Bruce, thanks for taking the time to find us the right call sign!!! This is your time to shine!!!
Another year has come to an end for the club this month. Where has the time is gone?

I’d like to thank Rhonda Curtis, Bill Jackson, Ron Schuetz and Chris Frederick for a great job. I would also like to thank the IT Team for working hard on getting our Website up to date. Thanks to Bob LaGrange for serving as Editor-in-Chief of the *Spark Gap*. Thanks to the membership for all the support that you have given the club.

Just a reminder, that our yearly picnic is Sept 21st at Union Christian Church located at 1331 E 300 S, Franklin, IN. Club will provide the meat, lemonade, ice tea and water. Please bring a side dish and chairs. This is a family event, so please bring the spouse and kids!! Hope to see everyone there.

Jacki – K1GQOG

President



Birthdays for the month of September:

KC9VLU - Lovrinic Jacob

W9DBA - Scott Nelson

KA9YKN - William Spann

KD9IZY - Tracy Walker

160 Years Since The Carrington Event

September 1 marks the 160th anniversary of the Carrington Event, the strongest geomagnetic storm known to have hit Earth since at least the 14th century. The event was named for British astronomer Richard Carrington, who first viewed and sketched the huge sunspot complex on the sun from which a gigantic solar flare -- a coronal mass ejection -- erupted, as he watched. Within hours, Earth was virtually enveloped by an aurora borealis that was visible even at lower latitudes and into the tropics. It was a truly spectacular light show that in some places, turned night into day. When the flare interacted with Earth's magnetosphere, however, it was another story.

This was the Victorian age, when practical wireless was still a few decades off, but the "auroral phenomena," as it was called then, had "a remarkable manifestation of magnetic influence" on telegraph wires -- the internet of the day, as it were. So considerable was the effect that *The New York Times* reported telegraph operators were able to disconnect the batteries that normally operated the system and were "working by the atmospheric current entirely!" Although the operators subsequently were able to reconnect their batteries, the storm continued to affect the lines. A telegraph manager in Pittsburgh reported "streams of fire" emitted from the circuits. In Washington, DC, telegraph operator Frederick W. Royce was severely shocked as his forehead grazed a ground wire. A witness said an arc of fire jumped from Royce's head to the telegraphic equipment.

The *Times* account quoted an operator in Worcester, Massachusetts, who said, "During ten years' experience in telegraphing, I have frequently observed the effect of the Aurora Borealis on the wires, but never before have I seen it so grand and appalling."

Operators said that at times the polarity of the battery power supply would become reversed. "One moment the batteries would begin to boil over, and we would have so strong a circuit that the armature would not come away from the magnet; the next moment, there would be no current at all," a report from Quebec recounted.

Based on examinations of ice samples, scientists believe that geomagnetic storms two and three times stronger occurred prior to the 14th century.

After the Carrington Event, scientists began paying a lot more attention to solar phenomena and sunspots. -- *Thanks to Frank Donovan, W3LPL ARRL News Sept 2019*

DXpedition to use FT8 robot?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

It's inevitable. At some point, machines are going to render humans irrelevant. It's been a recurring theme in science fiction since before I was born (1955), and there are numerous predictions of the Singularity, the point in time when machines will be smarter than human, occurring between 2030 and 2045.

It may happen in amateur radio sooner than we think. A couple of days ago, one of my readers, sent me a link to a blog post by John, AE5X: Automated FT8 "FoxBot" in upcoming DXpedition – confirmed. He wrote:

"A DXpedition to Tokelau will take place from 1 to 11 October and it will be your chance to work an FT8 robot operating in Fox/Hound mode.

"Stathis SV5DKL has been working on a "FoxBot" for some time now, is listed as a partner to this DXpedition and has confirmed that the DXpedition will be using his FoxBot."

John has since updated this post, noting "The SV5DKL logo has now been removed and the DX team will be in 'full compliance' with the mode." Full compliance meaning following the rules set up by the ARRL DXCC rules.

The ARRL is, of course, against the use of robots. A recent *ARRL Letter* noted:

"ARRL has incorporated changes to the rules for all ARRL-sponsored contests and DXCC, prohibiting automated contacts and requiring that an actual operator is initiating and carrying out a contact. These changes also apply to Worked All States (including Triple Play and 5-Band WAS), Fred Fish W5FF Memorial, and VUCC awards. The changes are effective immediately and affect the rules for both HF contests, and VHF/UHF contests as well as DXCC.

"A resolution at the July ARRL Board of Directors meeting pointed to 'growing concern over fully automated contacts being made and claimed' for contest and for DXCC credit. The rules now require that each claimed contact include contemporaneous direct initiation by the operator on both sides of the contact. Initiation of a contact may either be local or remote."

As AE5X says, however, the use of FT8 robots in the future is a certainty. Sooner or later, some DXpedition is going to use an FT8 robot without saying anything about it. How is the ARRL going to know that a DXpedition is using robots if the DXpedition operators don't tell them?

I'm wondering when some DXpedition is going to give up on SSB and CW altogether. Why bother with those modes when you can make hundreds or thousands more contacts by just operating FT8?

Another thought just occurred to me. If the ARRL gets its way and Techs are awarded HF digital privileges, how long will it take for some enterprising Tech to make the DXCC Honor Roll using FT8 exclusively. Oh, the horror of it all!

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Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the KB6NU amateur radio blog (KB6NU.Com), the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides (KB6NU.Com/study-guides/), and often appears on the ICQPodcast (icqpodcast.com). When he's not wondering when robots are going to take over the world, he likes to (manually) operate CW on the HF bands.



Would like to thank all those that came out to Heartnut Fest and to those of you who stayed for the day. We had four for the full day and four others that stopped by to chat. We also had a lot of activity going on in the morning hours. Think we had about 15 people stop by and asked questions and three asked about testing. We had nice weather and operated from Dave and Chris's vehicles. Thanks again to those who joined us!

..... Story and pictures by Jacki KI6QOG

Former MARC Members now Silent Key:



O'Connell-K9VQI SK

Eighty-nine year old Daniel O'Connell, K9VQI passed away on June 19, 2019. He was a native of Lafayette, Indiana and served in the Navy as a radio operator on the USS Wisconsin. Dan worked for the Indianapolis Fire Department from 1955 until 1985 as a Chauffeur. O'Connell held a General Class license and was active in club activities from the late 1980s through early 2000.

Poe – K9POE SK

K9POE was 86 when he became a silent key on August 16, 2019. Kenny was a retired air traffic controller and worked at the Indianapolis International Air Port for over twenty five years. Kenny was active in the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club and Optimist International. Kenny held a General Class license and enjoyed Amateur Radio.

**The MARC Annual Picnic will be at the United Christian Church, in Franklin
1331 E 300 S, Franklin, IN 46131**

Saturday September 21, 2019 Will eat at 1130 (EDT)

FROM south side of Franklin:

US 31, south of Franklin. (South of the traffic signal at South St, at the cemetery) continue south approx. 1/3 mile. (0.3 on odometer)

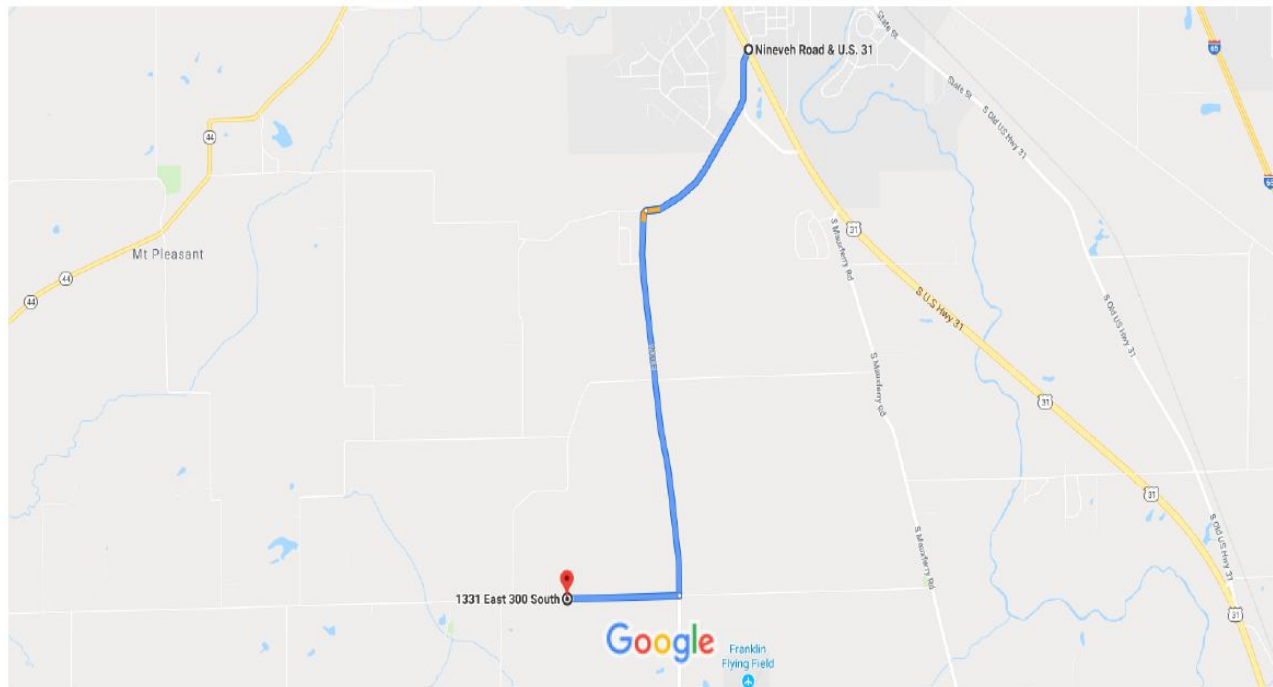
Turn RIGHT (South) on Nineveh Road. CR 200 E

Continue south to 300 S. 3 miles

Turn RIGHT (West) on 300 S.

Continue to 1331 E 300 S, United Christian Church. 1/2 mile

MAP:



Map data ©2019 2000 ft

FROM SR 135:

SR 135 south of Bargersville, south of traffic signal at SR 44, approx. 1 mile to 300S.

Turn LEFT (East) on 300 S.

Continue 4 miles to the church.

"TALK IN" will be on 146.835, MARC Club repeater.

Greenwood Band Event

From the sound of Alpine horns to the blaring brass of a Indianapolis brass band music flowed from the Greenwood Amphitheatre all day August 24th. Nearby Brenda Haler-

KC9EBL could be seen waving her orange tipped flashlight as she directed dozens of cars into and around the Greenwood community center. Ten other MARC members assisted with communications and traffic during the day



long Greenwood Community band invitational. John-KF6EFG, Dave-KB9LOT, Bob N9ISU and Jack-W8ISH handled the traffic and parking around Surina Square park. Across the street Ken-KD9ALA and Marlys-KD9BHM directed visitors to the Little League parking



lot. Phil-AE9H handled the remote church parking lot while Wilson-KD9FBC, Scott-W9DBA and Jim-KD9NNL were kept busy directing people into the limited Little League parking lot.



Most of the hams came equipped with FRS radios to communicate directly with golf carts that shuttled visitors and band members with instruments to the amphitheater. Great fall type weather made for an enjoyable day. Bob LaGrange-N9SIU thanked all the hams for helping with this event.



Photos and story

by Jack w8ish

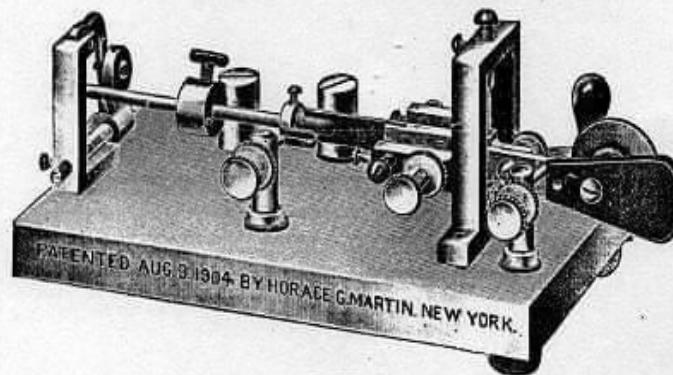
Thanks again to all that helped with the Greenwood Community Band Festival, they want our club to help again in 2020. Bob N9SIU

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

THE VIBROPLEX for the next 30 days will be sold at **\$5.00**

The demand is going to be large

DO NOT DELAY. SEND IN YOUR ORDER NOW.



We are determined to place in every telegraph office in the United States and Canada at least one VIBROPLEX in order to demonstrate its superiority over all other sending machines, and we are willing to sacrifice profits to accomplish this purpose.

**For the next thirty days we will fill
all orders for the Vibroplex at the
ridiculously low price of \$5.00.**

Our perfect manufacturing facilities enable us to make this offer. Our plant occupies 10,000 square feet of floor space, fully equipped with new and up-to-date machinery, which is devoted exclusively to the manufacture of electrical and mechanical apparatus.

WRITE US FOR PRICES ON ANYTHING. WE WILL SAVE YOU MONEY.

United Electrical Manufacturing Company

HORACE G. MARTIN,

Vice-President and General Manager

53 Vesey Street, New York

I think we all missed the big sale on this Vibroplex key.

UP – COMING ACTIVITIES AND HAMFESTS

09/14/2019 -- 0800 Johnson County Heart Nut Festival, Johnson County Park

09/21/2019 -- MARC Monthly Meeting and Annual Picnic, Union Christian Church eat at 1130.

10/19/2019 -- 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.



If you would like to be part of Johnson County ARES please contact Bob LaGrange
N9SIU@YAHOO.COM

Buy, Sell or Trade:

Ed Woods, WD9DVA, retired from amateur radio, he is 90. He has some equipment and wanted to see if there is anyone that may be interested. Ed has all of his amateur radio station for sale. If interested please contact Bob N9SIU at n9siu@yahoo.com. Ed would like to have his radios and equipment go to a HAM that would use it and enjoy the hobby like he has.

Events that need HAMs to assist:

Three events requiring amateur radio communications have been posted on ARES Connect.

The Hoosier Hikers Council has requested assistance with communications for their Knobstone mini marathon (walk/run) in Morgan/Monroe State Forest on October 12th.

The Martinsville Fall Foliage Festival has requested assistance with their annual parade in Martinsville on October 13th.

The Indiana Trail Runners Association has requested amateur radio support during their annual Tecumseh Marathon which runs from Morgan/Monroe State Forest to Yellowwood Lake in Brown County on October 26th.

If you are available to assist with any or all of these events, you can register on ARES Connect or let me know directly and I will put you on the list of volunteers.

Thanks for your support & participation!
Brian Elliott N9JPX
n9jpx09@yahoo.com

BLUE RIVER VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY



2019 SHELBYVILLE TAILGATE

PLACE: SHELBY COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

500 FRANK ST, SHELBYVILLE, IN 46176

DATE: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2019 TIME: 8:00AM to NOON

SETUP: 7:00AM SATURDAY (INSIDE AND OUT)

*Talk-in Frequency: 145.48 MHz 88.5Hz PL
<http://www.brvars.com>*

The Shelbyville Tailgate 2019 will be held on October 19 at the Shelby County Fairgrounds. We have use of the Family Arts Building so that folks can setup their tables on the inside or outside, weather depending. We will be open at 7:00AM for anyone wishing to setup their table space. At 8:00AM we will open to the general public. Admission is free. No charge for inside or outside vendor space. Soft drinks, Coffee and Sausage Gravy and biscuits available while supplies last. No charge but donations will be accepted. **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE PERMITTED BY THE SHELBY COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION.** These folks own the property so we have to play by their rules. Your cooperation will be appreciated. We will be closing up shop around Noon.

This will be an old-fashion tailgate event where hams can get together, ohew over old times and embellish their recollections of ham radio past. You can buy, sell or trade your ham related gear and visit with all of your ham radio friends. This tailgate event carries on in the tradition started by Ralph Polston, K9SEW, some years ago when he started having tailgates in his side yard. We are trying to maintain the spirit of those events and perhaps widen the circle of folks who might come visit with us. See you there. 73

www.brvars.com



Reminiscing back to when tailgates were tailgates.



Photos taken when tailgate was in Ralph's sideyard.

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR A GREAT TIME



MID-SATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month at the Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a *HAM* to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

W9MID Repeater:

146.835/
146.235 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

Club Officers:

President: Jacki Frederick – KI6QOG
Vice President: Bill Jackson – KM6CRL
Secretary: Rhonda Curtis – WS9H
Treasurer: Ron Scheutz – K9THR
Repeater Trustee - Chris Frederick – KQ9Y

W9MID Repeater:

443.525/
448.525 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS
146.835/146.235 MHz (151.4 Hz PL Tone)

The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 836
Franklin, Indiana
46131

Spark Gap Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU

Please send your articles to my email: n9siu@yahoo.com no later than the 2nd week of the month.



Special thanks to Johnson County REMC for the use of their community room for meetings and testing.